

FLORIDA INDIANS.

MESSAGE

FROM

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

TRANSMITTING

Report of Secretary of War, relative to Indians remaining in Florida.

JANUARY 27, 1844.

Read, and referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

To the House of Representatives:

I transmit, herewith, a report of the Secretary of War, and accompanying papers, containing the information respecting the Indians remaining at present in Florida, requested by a resolution of the House of Representatives of the 10th instant.

JOHN TYLER.

WASHINGTON, *January 26, 1844.*

WAR DEPARTMENT, *January 25, 1844.*

SIR: In answer to a resolution of the House of Representatives of the 10th instant, requesting the President of the United States to inform the House "under what arrangement the Indians at present in Florida remain there; whether any, and what, steps are in progress for their removal under the treaty of Payne's Landing; whether any trading-houses have been established, or are contemplated to be established, for their use; whether any compensation is paid to any one as Indian agent or commissioner in Florida; whether any annuity or presents have been allowed to any of the Indians now in Florida; and what part of the public domain in Florida has been surrendered to the exclusive occupation of said Indians, the area and boundaries thereof; and whether said occupation is unconditional, or for a definite period, and upon stipulated terms;"—I respectfully transmit herewith to the President, copies of reports made by the Adjutant General of the army, and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, which contain all the information required by the resolution, so far as it can now be furnished by this department.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. M. PORTER.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

DEPARTMENT OF WAR,
Office of Indian Affairs, January 20, 1844.

SIR: A resolution of the House of Representatives, of the 10th instant, has been referred by you to this office. It is thus worded:

"Resolved, That the President of the United States be requested to inform the House under what arrangement the Indians at present in Florida remain there; whether any, and what, steps are in progress for their removal under the treaty of Payne's Landing; whether any trading-houses have been established, or are contemplated to be established, for their use; whether any compensation is paid to any one as Indian agent, or commissioner, in Florida; whether any annuity or presents have been allowed to any of the Indians now in Florida; and what part of the public domain in Florida has been surrendered to the exclusive occupation of said Indians, the area and boundaries thereof; and whether said occupation is unconditional, or for a definite period, and upon stipulated terms."

Upon this resolution I have the honor to report, that the requirement of the first clause of the same is not answerable by reference to the files of the Indian Office, at which no communication showing the terms on which the Seminole pacification was ultimately arranged has ever been received. But (and this leads me to the second and fourth clauses of the resolution, which, from their close relation in matter, will be most properly answered together) it is not believed that any arrangement exists, which should interfere with the measures that the department has been, and is still pursuing, to accomplish, at the earliest day practicable, the removal of the entire Indian population of Florida to the new homes assigned them in the west. The number so far removed is 3,824; of which 212 went off during the last year. How many still remain is not certainly known, but they are not thought to be numerous. The business of emigration is under the immediate charge of L. G. Capers, who was appointed disbursing and emigrating agent of the Seminoles east, on the 6th of February, 1841, at a compensation of \$5 per day, with allowance for "necessary travelling expenses." His last report in relation more particularly to the emigration represents its progress as slow—the Indians coming in for enrolment only in very small and occasional parties; but he expresses the belief that, by the end of the year, a sufficiently large party would be prepared to start; and this period having passed, the next intelligence may, perhaps, enable me to state that the emigration is very nearly or fully closed.

The third clause of the resolution inquires whether any trading-houses have been established, &c. No such houses are known to exist; no instructions for their establishment have emanated from this office, and none are at this time contemplated.

No "annuity" has ever "been allowed to any of the Indians now in Florida;" and this is the only inquiry of what remains of the resolution, to which the information of this office enables me to frame an answer. If any "presents have been allowed," the evidence of it will probably be found in the office of the Second Auditor, amongst the accounts of those to whom the disposal of the public funds was confided.

As to the extent and geographical description of the "public domain in Florida surrendered to the exclusive occupation of the Indians," (if any,) and the stipulated term and conditions of said occupation, I do not know where the information is to be sought, unless in the office of the Adjutant

General, to which, it is presumed, the reports of the officer commanding in Florida were addressed.

Respectfully submitted :

T. HARTLEY CRAWFORD.

Hon. J. M. PORTER, *Secretary of War.*

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, January 20, 1844.

SIR: In compliance with the resolution of the 10th instant, of the House of Representatives, requesting that the House be "informed under what arrangements the Indians at present in Florida remain there; whether any, and what, steps are in progress for their removal under the treaty of Payne's Landing;" &c. referred to this office, I have the honor to submit herewith extracts of certain instructions from the War Department, of May 10, 1842, and despatches from General Worth, the officer then charged with the conduct of affairs in Florida, and now carrying out the arrangements entered into during the summer of 1842.

The following are the instructions and despatches referred to, which afford the information called for respecting the Indians remaining in Florida, and the progressive measures for their removal west of the Mississippi:

1. Letter from Hon. J. C. Spencer, Secretary of War, dated May 10, 1842, to Major General Scott, commanding the army, communicating the views of the President in relation to the state of affairs in Florida, and directing the discontinuance of hostilities (marked A. No. 1.)

Major General Scott's letter, dated May 11, 1842, to Brevet Brigadier General Worth, communicating instructions of the War Department, &c. (A No. 2.)

2. Letter from Brevet Brigadier General Worth, dated July 24, 1842, to the Adjutant General, enclosing memorandum of the proceedings in a council held with a deputation from the southern Indians relative to a discontinuance of hostilities, and their remaining in certain prescribed limits, accompanied by a sketch of the country assigned them. (B.)

3. Memorandum of the council referred to in General Worth's letter of July 24, 1842, above. (C.)

4. Extract from General Worth's letter, dated August 12, 1842, to the Adjutant General, reporting the thorough pacification of affairs in Florida, &c. (D.)

5. "Orders" No. 28, dated August 14, 1842, of the commander in Florida, announcing that hostilities have ceased with the Florida Indians, and defining limits of the country in which they are permitted to hunt and plant. (E.)

6. Letter from Brigadier General W. J. Worth, dated November 17, 1843, to the Adjutant General, reporting the number of Indians remaining in Florida, their friendly disposition since the pacification of August 14, 1842, &c. &c. (F.)

In his despatch of November, 1843, General Worth states:

"As yet, few have manifested a disposition to emigrate; and the time has not arrived to effect their removal by coercive measures, as they are somewhat shy and distrustful of the whites. All have visited Tampa, except a

few of the very aged, but in parties of ten or fifteen only. These apprehensions, under the policy pursued, will soon wear away, when, if considered desirable, advantage may be taken of a favorable occasion to send off the whole; precipitancy will occasion much and vexatious difficulty.

"Since the pacification, August 14, 1842, these people have observed perfect good faith, and strictly fulfilled their engagements; not an instance of rudeness towards the whites has yet occurred," &c.

I submit also the map of Florida, on which the limits temporarily allowed the Indians under the pacification of August, 1842, are designated by red lines. General Worth reports that "no portion of the limits is suited for whites; a part only is fit for Indian purposes of cultivation, (that between Pease creek and Carlos-hatchee,) and much of this during a part of the year is under water. South of the Carlos-hatchee, the country is absolutely uninhabitable, and offers no advantages, except for game during a few months in the year."

The residue of the information called for by the resolution cannot be derived from the records of the Adjutant General's office.

Respectfully submitted:

R. JONES,
Adjutant General.

Hon. J. M. PORTER,
Secretary of War.

A No. 1.

WAR DEPARTMENT, May 10, 1842.

The communication of Colonel Worth, of the 14th February last, and the suggestions of the Major General commanding the army, contained in his letter of the 27th ult., in relation to the state of affairs in Florida, and the continuance of hostilities there, have been maturely considered; and I have now to communicate to the Major General commanding the army the views of the President upon the subject.

The very reduced number of the hostile Indians now in Florida, (believed not to exceed two hundred and forty,—including, probably, 80 warriors,) would seem to indicate that all has been accomplished which can be effected by the employment of a large military force in offensive operations. Unless such operations are to be continued until the last Indian in the peninsula shall be destroyed or captured, there must be some period when they should cease. That period, it is believed, has now arrived; and the protection of the inhabitants must be secured by other means, which, it is believed, can be effectually employed for that purpose.

The season is approaching which forbids the active and energetic movements which have distinguished the army in Florida, particularly during the last year; and the course of measures intended to be pursued must now be determined.

The communications of the Governor of Florida, of many of its intelligent citizens, and of various distinguished officers of the army, corroborate the views expressed by Colonel Worth, of the propriety of terminating

the present system of hostilities with the few Indians remaining in that Territory.

Anxious to curtail the extraordinary expenses incident to the warfare, and sincerely desirous of promoting peace, the President directs that Colonel Worth be authorized, as soon as he shall deem it expedient, to declare that hostilities against the Indians in Florida have ceased, and that they will not be renewed unless provoked by new aggressions on their part. And they will accordingly cease until their renewal be authorized by the proper authority. But this is not to be understood as forbidding any acts of self-defence, either by the troops or by citizens, against any attempts of Indians to molest them.

Such a reduction of the military force in Florida, as may be made consistently with the protection of the inhabitants, will, therefore, immediately be made; and the troops ordered out of the Territory will be stationed as the exigency of the public service may require. But it is deemed advisable that a force equal to at least two regiments be retained, to form a cordon, or line of protection, for the frontier settlements. The action of Congress will be invited to aid in the defence of the Territory, by the settlement of our citizens there, and offering to them inducements for such settlements, by gratuities of land, by allowing them rations for subsistence, and by the loan of arms. Until the decision of Congress is had on the subject, it is desirable that the settlements to be made should be within such line of protection as shall be established by Colonel Worth, who will take the necessary measures to effect this arrangement.

He will also use the means he possesses of communicating with the Indians yet remaining, and inducing them to consult their true interest, by joining their brethren at the west.

Shipments of forage and subsistence to Florida will be suspended until expressly called for by the officer in command there.

The Quartermaster General will instruct the senior officer of his department in Florida as to the manner of disposing of the public property that may not be required for use under the arrangements now directed—such as mules, horses, wagons, &c.—subject to the orders of the officer commanding the army in Florida.

Colonel Worth will be informed that the naval force on the coast has been directed by the Secretary of the Navy to withdraw, whenever the commanding officer in Florida shall declare the cessation of hostilities, and shall deem their services no longer necessary.

The Major General commanding the army will please communicate these directions to Colonel Worth, and give such further and other orders as may be necessary or proper to carry into effect the views of the President.

J. C. SPENCER.

To Major General WINFIELD SCOTT,
Commanding the Army.

True copy :

R. JONES,
Adjutant General.

A No. 2.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
Washington, May 11, 1842.

SIR: I enclose herewith, for your government in the command of the Florida army, a copy of instructions which I have received on the subject through the Department of War.

The instructions are so much in detail, that little remains to be added.

The manner of declaring the cessation of hostilities to the Indians, the troops, and the inhabitants, to take effect on a day to be fixed, is left to your discretion.

An early report from you, after making up a definitive judgment, as to the amount of force (not less than the Secretary has designated) deemed necessary for the defensive purposes indicated, as well as the cordon to be occupied by such force, is requested.

It is not expected that the cordon should be a regular line, either curved or straight. It may be, in parts, zigzag, with certain isolated or advanced posts—as Fort Mellon, Tampa bay, &c.—so as the better to cover or protect the inhabitants, and to secure, ultimately, by persuasion or negotiations, all the remaining Indians for emigration.

General orders No. 26, of yesterday, directs the embarkation of the 2d infantry for New York, and leaves to your discretion the time for sending eight companies of the 7th infantry to relieve detachments of the 3d artillery, therein designated. It is now deemed probable that you will soon give orders to that effect.

We have just received unofficial intelligence that you have realized, in great part, the happy results which you had anticipated in your last official report, from the late spirited affair with Halleck Tustenuggee, and other energetic operations.

Over and above the two companies of the 7th infantry, and one [two] company of the 3d artillery, to be stationed within the field [St. Augustine] of recent operations against the Florida Indians, what force will be needed, after the cessation of hostilities with those Indians, in order to carry out the views of the War Department?

The five troops of the 2d dragoons: can they be dispensed with? or other, and what part, of your remaining forces?

If you are confident (after giving reasonable weight to the opinions of Floridians) that the dragoons may be spared, you will, without waiting for further instructions, designate two troops for the post of Baton Rouge, under the lieutenant colonel of the regiment, and the remaining three for Fort Jesup; and put the five in motion for those respective stations—taking care to advise Brigadier General Taylor, at Fort Smith, of the approach of the three troops of his department, as also of the route given them, so that he may, on the route, change their destination if it should be deemed necessary either there or here.

Should you, in your own judgment, or in deference to the opinions of the inhabitants of Florida, deem it necessary to retain a part of the dragoons, (say three troops, and not the whole,) you will, in either case, send off the

other two troops to Baton Rouge, with or without the lieutenant colonel, as you may deem his presence most useful there or in Florida.

I remain, sir, with high respect, &c.,
WINFIELD SCOTT.

To Colonel W. J. WORTH,
Commanding army of Florida.

True copy :

R. JONES,
Adjutant General.

B.

HEADQUARTERS 9TH MILITARY DEPARTMENT,
Cedar Keys, July 24, 1842.

SIR: A deputation from the southern Indians met me, by appointment, at Fort Brooke, on the 21st inst. They came with authority from the principal men to hear my talk—the object, doubtless, with habitual Indian caution, to verify the accuracy of a previous messenger. I have the honor to forward a memorandum of what passed in council, and a sketch of the country in which they are permitted to hunt and plant. On the Gulf side there are natural and insurmountable obstacles to any settlement or occupancy by the whites, south of Pease creek. You will perceive that they are excluded from the islands on the south, and the entire coast (where our vessels are usually wrecked) on the east side.

I entertain no doubt of their sincerity, or that they will gladly conform to the terms of the indulgence accorded; but I have required the chiefs themselves to meet me at Fort Brooke on the 5th proximo, to give a pledge for the behavior of their followers.

These messengers say that a large portion have secretly expressed a wish to come in, in the autumn, to join their kindred in the west—a proposition which none dare make openly, as, by their laws, such would be instant death.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. J. WORTH, *Col. Commanding.*

ADJUTANT GENERAL U. S. ARMY,
Headquarters, Washington.

True copy :

R. JONES,
Adjutant General.

C.

FORT BROOKE, *July 22, 1842.*

Minutes of a talk held at Fort Brooke, Florida, July 21, 1842, by Colonel Worth, with Fosse Hadjo, an Indian of some distinction belonging to the southern band.

Fosse Hadjo stated that he was sent in by Billy Bowlegs, in consequence of a talk received from the colonel by the old Indian, and to say that the

talk had made him glad, and that the Seminoles and Mickasukies would all be glad to hear it; that Bowlegs had gone to give the talk to such of his people as he could find; and that when he assembles them, which he expects to do soon, he hopes to have a talk himself with the colonel. He does not wish the Creeks to live with them; they cannot agree; and should they occupy the same country, there will be frequent difficulties amongst them, owing to their bad conduct towards the whites. Sam Jones is the principal chief of the southern Indians, but he has only ten warriors with him;* he does not know where Jones now is, but he hopes soon to find him. Fosse Hadjo stated that Bowlegs had sent him with this talk, and to ascertain from the colonel if the talk brought by the old Indian is a true talk.

Colonel Worth stated to Fosse Hadjo that he had but a short talk to make. He had received word from the great father in Washington, that there must be no more fighting between his white and red children, and that no more blood must be shed between them; but that they must be friends, and shake hands together: that, although he lives a great distance from them, he sees the bleached bones of those who have been killed, and it makes his heart sad: that the great father who sends this word, is not the same they had some time since, but has been recently chosen by his white children. He is willing his red children should remain in Florida, or go to Arkansas, as they may prefer; but, as their friend and father, he advises them not to remain here, but to join their red brethren in the west, because many of their relations—some their fathers and mothers, some their children, and others their brothers or sisters—have gone there; and those that remain are few in numbers, and the whites are fast settling the country: the red men are decreasing in numbers, while the whites are increasing; they will be surrounded by a large number of them in a short time; and as there are some bad men amongst the whites, as there are also some bad Indians, they may have trouble. It would be better, therefore, that they should be separated a great distance from each other; but they could choose for themselves. Should they go to the west, they will receive money and a rifle for each warrior; also rations for one year. Should they remain, they will receive nothing, but only be permitted to occupy a piece of land, which they are distinctly to understand they are not to leave, except to visit Tampa to trade, where a trading-house will be established for them. The country they are to occupy is the same that was set apart for them by General Macomb in his arrangement with Chitney Tustenuggee in 1839. As some of our vessels may be wrecked on the coast, they are to promise to take care of, and treat with kindness, all persons they may find on the coast, and bring them in to the whites, from whom they will receive pay for their services, either in goods or money. This must be particularly attended to, as any outrages committed on these unfortunate persons will be severely punished. They must see that any depredations which may be committed by their people on the whites are punished by the Indian law, and any that may be committed by the whites on their people will in like manner be punished by the law of the whites. As their numbers are now so few, the great father is quite indifferent whether they remain in the country or go to the west; but if any shall hereafter wish to emigrate, they will be sent to Arkansas at any time their numbers amount to forty or fifty.

*He further stated that Jones had not made war upon the whites since the arrangement with General Macomb in 1839.

The colonel further stated to Fosse Hadjo, that he wished to have a talk as early as possible with Bowlegs and the rest of his people, who are authorized to transact business for the whole of them; and Fosse Hadjo promised to return in seventeen days, and have the talk required. He did not know if Sam Jones could be found in time for the talk, but would endeavor to have him and the Prophet both present. He also promised to bring with him some runners, to carry a talk to the Creeks. When shown the map of the portion of country to be allotted to them, embraced in red lines, he said he had a field just outside of that line, and asked if the line could not be extended, so as to take in the field. He was told this could not be done, but that he might this year gather the crop he had planted, but the next year he must plant within the line; with which he appeared quite satisfied. He left here on the 22d with the talk to Bowlegs, to return with that chief and others in seventeen days; and requested that on the thirteenth day Passacca and interpreter Toney might come out to meet them on their way in.

S. COOPER, A. A. G.

W. SEAWELL, *Capt. 7th Infantry.*

J. T. SPRAGUE, *Lt. & A. D. C.*

True copy :

R. JONES, *Adjutant General.*

D.

HEADQUARTERS, MILITARY DEPARTMENT No. 9,

Cedar Keys, August 12, 1842.

SIR: I have now to report the thorough pacification of this Territory. *Holaeta Emathlachee*, (Bowlegs,) accompanied by two noted sub-chiefs, representing the southern Indians, met me at Tampa on the 5th instant, and in their behalf gladly accepted the concession reported in my despatch of the 24th ultimo. Coming with me to this place, they proceeded in search of the Creeks, and returned on the 10th with *Octiarti*, *Tiger Tail*, and others representing those people. The former are to pass within the designated limits immediately; the latter as soon as they can be collected. Some have already crossed the Suwanee, and the whole will have done so in ten or twelve days. Many have already signified a wish to be sent to their friends in the west. *Tiger Tail*, particularly, is urgent to go immediately; but I have represented the importance to himself to take a respectable band with him. * * * *

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. J. WORTH, *Col. Comd'g.*

The ADJUTANT GENERAL, U. S. A.

Washington.

True copy :

R. JONES, *Adjutant General.*

E.

[Orders No. 28.] HEADQUARTERS, MILITARY DEPARTMENT No. 9,
Cedar Keys, August 14, 1842.

It is hereby announced that hostilities with the Indians within this Territory have ceased.

Measures are taken to pass the few remaining, within certain limits—those in the far south, immediately; those west of the Suwanee in a few days, who, meantime, there is every reasonable assurance, will conduct inoffensively if unmolested in their haunts.

The lands thus temporarily assigned as their planting and hunting grounds are within the following boundaries, to wit: From the mouth of Talachopke or Pease creek, up the left bank of that stream to the fork of the southern branch, and following that branch to the head or northern edge of Lake Istokpoga; thence down the eastern margin of that lake, to the stream which empties from it into the Kissimmee river, following the left bank of said stream and river to where the latter empties into Lake Okeechobee; thence due south through said lake and the everglades, to Shark river, following the right bank of that river to the Gulf; thence along the Gulf shore (excluding all islands between Punta Rassa and Charlotte harbor) to the place of beginning.

The foregoing arrangements are in accordance with the instructions of the President of the United States. * * * *

By order of Colonel Worth:

S. COOPER,
Assistant Adjutant General.

True copy:

R. JONES, Adjutant General.

F.

HEADQUARTERS, 9TH MILITARY DEPARTMENT,
St. Augustine, E. F., Nov. 17, 1843.

SIR: In compliance with your instructions of September 28, the following statement of Indians remaining in Florida is submitted, viz:

Of warriors—

| | | | | |
|--------------|---|---|---|----|
| Seminoles | - | - | - | 42 |
| Mickasukies | - | - | - | 33 |
| Creeks | - | - | - | 10 |
| Tallahassées | - | - | - | 10 |

95

Including women and children, 300. Holate-mathlochee, (Bowlegs,) nephew of Micanopy, is the acknowledged chief; Assinawa, Otulke-thloko, and Halpatten-Tustonuggee, sub-chiefs.

The foregoing has been obtained from many Indians, at different periods during the past year; and it is believed to be correct—quite as likely above

as below the real number. As yet, few have manifested a disposition to emigrate; and the time has not arrived to effect their removal by coercive measures, as they are somewhat shy and distrustful of the whites. All have visited Tampa, except a few of the very aged, but in parties of *ten* or *fifteen* only. These apprehensions, under the policy pursued, will soon wear away; when, if considered desirable, advantage may be taken of a favorable occasion to send off the whole; precipitancy will occasion much and vexatious difficulty. When done, it must be thoroughly and effectually done; for if *ten* of these warriors remained, maddened to a spirit of hostility, they would suffice to break up and scatter the entire line of new settlements, although ten-fold their numbers; which, although composed of occupants under the armed occupation bill, have neither weapons, nor the disposition to use them; not one in ten appeared with arms of any description. Though a practical satire upon the purpose and policy of the law, it may be regarded as fortunate. There will be some caution and hesitation in the indulgence of hostile feelings toward the Indian.

Since the pacification, August 14th, 1842, these people have observed perfect good faith, and strictly fulfilled their engagements; not an instance of rudeness towards the whites has yet occurred; they plant and hunt diligently; take their skins and game to the trading establishment at Tampa, procure the necessaries they desire, and return quietly to their grounds. All are within the prescribed limits, except the recently discovered band of Halpatten, who, it will be remembered, withdrew from Colonel Vose, at Cedar Keys, in November last; they have come forward and asked to be sent south, and are now on the route.

The whites are very generally expressing the wish that the Indians shall be allowed to remain, and in this they consult their own interest and good policy; when better assured of the pacific disposition of the few red men, this sentiment, I doubt not, will be universal—with the exception, perhaps, of the few who may still entertain hopes of thriving by new agitation.

The Indians emigrated, of which you are under the impression there is no account in your office, you will find reported in my communication of February 22d, 1843; this was the last party emigrated. Complete rolls of all, including negroes, sent off by myself, have been regularly forwarded by the agent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. J. WORTH,
Brig. Gen. Com'g.

To General JONES, *Adjutant General, U. S. A.,*
Headquarters, Washington.

True copy :

R. JONES,
Adjutant General.

